Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (currently amended): A reticle transfer system comprising:

a fork arm comprising a base, and a plurality of tines for supporting a reticle, each of said tines having a base end at which the tine is integral with and extends from said base, and a distal end remote from the base end;

a linear carrier having a gripper for temporarily holding the reticle transferred by the fork arm; and

a [sensor disposed on the] plurality of position sensors disposed on said base ends of the tines of said fork arm [and operable detect], respectively, so as to together enable the detection of the presence of a [reticule] reticle at a given position relative to the tines of the fork arm.

Claim 2 (currently amended): A reticle transfer system as claimed in claim 1, and further comprising an alarm operatively connected to said position [sensor] sensors so as to generate an alarm signal when the position [sensor detects] sensors detect a reticle on the fork arm at said given position.

Claim 3 (currently amended): A reticle transfer system as claimed in claim 1, wherein the position [sensor comprises] sensors comprise a plurality of photo sensors disposed, respectively, at the base ends of said tines [opposite free ends of said tines].

Claim 4 (currently amended): A reticle transfer and storage system comprising:

a reticle library;

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a plurality of reticle cassettes supported in said reticle library;

a fork arm disposed adjacent said cassettes, said fork arm comprising a base, and a plurality of tines for supporting a reticle, each of said tines having a base end at which the tine is integral with and extends from said base, and a distal end remote from the base end, and said fork arm being movable horizontally and vertically in a working range that encompasses the interior of each of said cassettes so as to be capable of withdrawing a reticle stored in any of said cassettes;

a linear carrier disposed outside of said library and movable to a position within the working range of said fork arm; and

a [sensor disposed on the] plurality of position sensors disposed on said base ends of the tines of said fork arm [and operable detect], respectively, so as to together enable the detection of the presence of a [reticule] reticle at a given position relative to the tines of the fork arm.

Claim 5 (currently amended): A reticle transfer and storage system as claimed in claim 4, and further comprising an alarm operatively connected to said position [sensor] sensors so as to generate an alarm signal when the position [sensor detects] sensors detect a reticle on the fork arm at said given position.

Claim 6 (currently amended): A reticle transfer and storage system as claimed in claim 4, wherein the position [sensor comprises] sensors comprise a plurality of photo sensors disposed, respectively, at the base ends of said tines [opposite free ends of said tines].